

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 241682

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QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 1800

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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF BOOK PUBLISHED IN SOVIET UNION ON SOVIET/
FINNISH RELATIONS PROVOKES CONTROVERSY

1. SUMMARY: HUFVUDSTADSBLADET PRINTED ARTICLE REVIEWING
BOOK RECENTLY AVAILABLE IN MOSCOW BOOKSTORE CONCERNING 1948
SOVIET/FINNISH FRIENDSHIP COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE
PACT IN PARTICULAR AND FINNISH/SOVIET RELATIONS IN GENERAL.
ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, BOOK RAISES QUESTIONS CONCERNING
FINNISH INTERPRETATION OF ITS NEUTRALITY VIS-A-VIS ITS
MILITARY/POLITICAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE PACT. THE BOOK
HAS SPARKED VIGOROUS PRESS COMMENT IN FINLAND. EMBASSY
WOULD APPRECIATE ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING COPIES OF BOOK AND
AVAILABLE BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING AUTHORS AND
SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLICATION OF BOOK AT THIS TIME.

2. HELSINKI SWEDISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER HUFVUDSTADSBLADET
AUGUST 25 PRINTED REVIEW ARTICLE ON BOOK RECENTLY
AVAILABLE IN MOSCOW BOOKSTORES CONCERNING SOVIET/FINNISH
RELATIONS AND FINNISH NEUTRALITY. THE BOOK, PRINTED IN RUSSIAN
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PAGE 02 STATE 241682

LANGUAGE, IS TITLED "THIRTY YEARS OF GOOD NEIGHBOR RELATIONS",

AND ITS AUTHORS ARE T. BARTENYEV AND URI KOMMISSAROV, THE LATTER NAME AT LEAST CONSIDERED HERE A PSEUDONYM.

3. ACCORDING TO THE FINNISH REVIEWER, AND JUDGING FROM QUOTES FROM THE BOOK CONTAINED IN REVIEW ARTICLE, THE BOOK CRITICIZES A TENDENCY IN WEST AND SPECIFICALLY IN FINLAND TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE NEUTRALITY PROVISIONS OF 1948 PACT OF FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE BETWEEN SOVIET UNION AND FINLAND AND TO DEPRECATE THE MILITARY-POLITICAL PROVISIONS OF THE PACT. THE BOOK DISCREDITS A STUDY OF THE TREATY MADE IN 1957 BY A SOVIET JURIST WHICH HAD CONTENDED THAT THE FRIENDSHIP PACT IS A TREATY TO GUARANTEE FINLAND'S NEUTRALITY RATHER THAN A TREATY OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE. THE BOOK, ACCORDING TO THE REVIEWER, DIRECTLY CRITICIZES THE WELL-KNOWN STUDY "FINNISH NEUTRALITY" BY FINLAND'S FORMER AMBASSADOR TO THE UN MAX JAKOBSON IN WHICH JAKOBSON INTERPRETED TREATY AS PRIMARILY AIMED AT GUARANTEEING FINNISH NEUTRALITY IN THE EVENT OF CONFLICT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

4. A RELEVANT EXCERPT FROM BOOK IS: "...FINLAND IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS DESIRE TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE CONFLICTS OF THE SUPERPOWERS, MAY ASSUME A NEUTRAL POSITION ON QUESTIONS NOT CONCERNED WITH THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION AND IN TERMS OF DEFENSE INTERESTS THAT DO NOT CONCERN THE ENDEAVORS TO PROTECT THE SOVIET NORTH-EASTERN BORDER AND FINLAND ITSELF. IN OTHER WORDS, FINLAND'S ENDEAVORS TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE CONFLICTS OF THE SUPERPOWERS MUST NOT COME INTO CONFLICT WITH THE SPIRIT AND ESSENCE OF THE PACT OF 1948, OR WITH THE COMMITMENTS THEREIN SET FORTH TO MAINTAIN AND DEVELOP FRIENDLY AND GOOD NEIGHBOR RELATIONS."

5. THE BOOK HAS PROVOKED HERE THE MOST VIGOROUS PRESS COMMENT ON FINNISH/SOVIET RELATIONS IN SOME TIME. ALMOST ALL MAJOR PAPERS HAVE HAD ARTICLES AND SEVERAL PAPERS, INCLUDING HELSINGIN SANOMAT (HS), HUFVUDSTATBLADET, AAMULEHTI AND HARD-LINE COMMUNIST PAPER TIEDENANTOJA HAVE PUBLISHED EDITORIALS. THE HS EDITORIAL STATED THAT THE BOOK RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS AS TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FINLAND AND SOVIET UNION AND DESCRIBED AS "STRANGE...THE ATTEMPT TO CONTRAST FINNISH
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 241682

NEUTRALITY WITH FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION." HS EDITORIAL CLOSED BY OPINING THAT "IF NO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ARE MADE IN FINLAND IN FAVOR OF THE NEUTRALITY DECLARED SO POMPOUSLY IN PAST YEARS, THIS WILL EASILY GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT FINLAND HERSELF NO LONGER SEEKS TO OUTLINE THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF HER FOREIGN POLICY." TIEDENANTOJA RESPONDED BY ATTACKING HS AND AAMULEHTI ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS AS FILLED WITH INNUENDOS AND RIGHTIST ATTACKS

ON GOOD FINNISH/SOVIET RELATIONS.

6. SOME ARTICLES DESCRIBE BOOK AS AN UPDATED VERSION OF A BOOK APPEARING IN FINNISH LANGUAGE IN 1974 BY KOMMISSAROV ENTITLED "FINLAND FINDS ITS PATH", BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR TO WHAT EXTENT BOOK REPRESENTS A NEW ANALYSIS.

7. EMBASSY CANNOT USEFULLY ANALYZE THE NEW PUBLICATION BECAUSE OF INCOMPLETENESS OF REVIEW ARTICLE. EMBASSY WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ASSISTANCE OF DEPARTMENT AND AMEMBASSY MOSCOW OBTAINING TWO COPIES OF THE BOOK AND IN PROVIDING AVAILABLE BACKGROUND INFORMATION AS TO IDENTITY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF AUTHORS AND THE TIMING OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOOK. (BOOK WIDELY CONSIDERED HERE TO BE AUTHORED OR COMMISSIONED BY SOVIET EMBASSY.) EMBASSY WOULD PARTICULARLY BE INTERESTED TO KNOW WHAT DATE THE BOOK WAS APPROVED FOR PRINTING.

8. MEANWHILE, AND PENDING MORE COMPLETE INFORMATION, THE PRESS REACTION ALONE WHICH THE REVIEW ARTICLE HAS SPARKED IS SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT. AUSTAD UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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